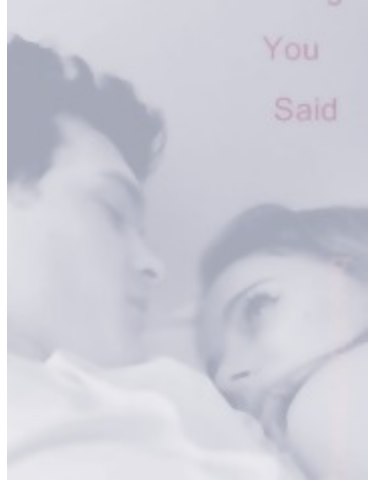
You
Said

Things You Said by Brown Eyes Parker

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Summary: a collection of one-shots revolving around Mike & Eleven and things they say to each other.

1. things you said at 1am

things you said at 1am

you, you can be queen and i, i can be king. . .

She tells him about her time in the labs when it seems like they're the only two in the world who are awake and secrets are whispered like prayers in the dark. He listens as the details are leaked out over super coms during the hours between midnight and morning, trying hard to control his anger.

"There were so many experiments," she says one night, her voice heavy with sleep and dredged up fears long buried with a loving home and a family and friends who care about her.

Mike refrains for asking her to tell him more even though he is morbidly curious. He wants to know everything about her past and try to make it better. But she offers him so little and he doesn't press her for more. He never wants to force her to do anything she doesn't want to do.

"Tell me something good," she whispers a few seconds later.

He weaves a story about a king who finds a queen with no country or castle one rainy night when he was out riding his horse. He rescues her and brings her home, along the way they have many adventures and for a short time, the king loses the queen but eventually she comes back to him.

It is a story without a definitive end, he says in conclusion. But she does not connect reality to fiction. She tells him that he finds a happy ending for the king and queen. Their alarms go off then, telling them it's time to get up and start getting ready for the school day.

.

"Water, so much water!" Eleven gasps into the super com a week or two later.

Mike knows her well enough to know this is another snippet from her

past, another experience from the lab at the edge of town. Tonight he is brave enough to ask her to tell him more.

"What do you mean El?" he whispers gently.

"Tank," Eleven replies. "They would put me in a tank."

"With water?"

"Yes."

He remembers from the time they put her in the makeshift bathtub at school, water intensifies her powers. He feels the familiar old anger bubbling up inside him. He feels helpless and he has to remind himself that they are safe.

No one will ever get them again even though they are still haunted by nightmares and shadows.

"Tell me something good," Eleven requests wearily and he can picture her lying on her bed, clutching her pillow tightly around her waist with one hand.

Mike gathers his thoughts enough to tell her more about the king and the queen. He tells her about how the queen confides in the king about her past and how he wants to save her from it but he is helpless to do so.

"Mike, that *isn't* good," Eleven chides sweetly.

"The king likes the queen *a lot*," Mike says.

"How much?"

"Enough to slay dragons for her," Mike answers. "Enough to follow her into hell."

"Did he? When she went away?" Eleven asks, remembering the middle part of the story,

"He couldn't," Mike admits. "But he wanted to."

"She came back?"

And Mike remembers she was looking for something to distract her from the darkness of her past.

"Yes," he replies. "She came back to him."

.

"I didn't always get to eat," Eleven says, they're lying side-by-side on his basement floor and sharing a carton of late night chocolate ice cream, they haven't even gone to sleep yet.

Mike doesn't need to ask why she didn't always eat. He's sure it's the equivalent of being sent to bed without dinner but Brenner probably didn't sneak her supper like his mother had when he had done something wrong. A secret sign all was forgiven and that she still loved him.

Eleven leans her head on his shoulder. "Tell me something good," she whispers. "The Queen and the King?"

"The Queen didn't talk much when the King found her," Mike answers without thinking about it much. "She didn't even really have a name. If she did, she didn't even know what it was. A wicked wizard had stolen her identity, her vocabulary. He'd stolen almost everything from her."

"But the King took her in," Eleven replies, knowing enough of the story to know where he is going. "Like *you* took *me* in!"

"Exactly like that," Mike agrees, his hand finds her's. "The King took her in and he gave her a real name and he gave her words."

Eleven frowns. "And she was happy?"

"They both were," Mike says.

"Until she left."

"She came back though," Mike reminds her.

.

"The story is about us."

It is not what Mike is expecting to hear during one of their 1am conversations. He expects more confessions about her old living conditions, triggered by her still present nightmares. He never thought she would put 2 and 2 together even though she is just as smart as him.

"What story?"

"Don't play dumb Mike," Eleven answers almost impatiently. "The one you've been telling me about the King and the Queen. It's about *us*!"

"Maybe I borrowed a few real life events. . ." Mike says cautiously.

"Friends don't lie," Eleven reminds him, whipping out a phrase she hasn't used in ages. "It's a good story Mike."

Mike blushes and doesn't know what to say. "Yeah," he finally agrees.

"I hope we have a happy ending," Eleven tells him. "I like happily ever afters."

"I do too," Mike confesses. "Just don't tell the guys!"

Eleven laughs.

.

"Tell me something good," Eleven begs, she's woken up from another nightmare (they are fewer and farther between now but still part of her life). She turns on her belly and looks at Mike with expectation in her wide brown eyes.

"Once upon a time, in a faraway land a king went out riding in the rain and he found a queen without a name and without a voice and a place to call home. He rescued her and gave her words and a name and a place to live. Evil forces tried to pull them apart but they were destined to be together and she came back to him. One day they realized they loved each other. So, they got married and spent the

rest of their lives trying to create a happily ever after."

.

Author's Note:

The King and Queen reference in this story is of course a nod to "Heroes" by David Bowie (and beautifully covered by Peter Gabriel). I hope you'll tell me what you thought. And I'm sorry if I'm copying anyone or "stealing" stories. It was completely unintentional.

I'll be back (NEXT SATURDAY) with more in this series.

Until Next Time!

Love,

Holly, 10/14/2016

2. things you said through your teeth (alt)

things you said through your teeth (alternate)

It's just that I'm so afraid someone might steal you away, I'd lose my mind

"What's the matter with you?" Mike asks through gritted teeth, Indiana is in the middle of a severe heat and everybody is miserable.

Eleven is standing in front of him, wearing flip-flops, a modest one-piece and one of his old Hawaiian shirts. She frowns and holds her can of Coke to her neck, trying to cool off but it's as warm as the sunshine. "What are you talking about?"

"You were flirting with Jake Perretti!" Mike answers. "I saw you!"

"I tripped over a pool float," Eleven tells him. "He was *just* helping me up! What's the matter with *you*!?"

He rolls his eyes and runs his fingers through his hair. He doesn't believe it for a second. Jake has been trying to steal her all year. He looks like Michael Schoeffing and all the girls are crazy about him but for some reason he's only had his eyes on Eleven and Mike can't stand him.

It seems like Eleven has been oblivious to his flirting and passes. Until today. He is so jealous, he can barely see straight. The guys are huddled together a few feet away from them, avoiding eye contact and listening to their conversation.

"He wasn't just helping!" Mike insists, shooting a look in the football player's direction. His fan club has gathered around him, a herd of gorgeous girls in a rainbow array of bikinis and tanned skin.

Eleven sighs. "We're *friends*."

"*Friends?"* Mike repeats tightly, his stomach dropping all the way to his toes. "You spend time with him?"

"What is wrong with you!?" Eleven asks again. "I spend time with Dustin and Lucas and Will."

"That's different! Will is your brother! You can't not hang out with him!" Mike answers, growing hotter by the second and not just from the sun beating down on him. "Lucas and Dustin know how—"

Eleven lowers her soda and looks at him. "What are you talking about?"

Mike shrugs, his feelings for her are something he hasn't said aloud in all the days they've known each other and he's not about to tell her now. Not when they're in the middle of an argument, surrounded by their friends and classmates and little kids begging their parents to let them go into the water.

"Mike? What do Dustin and Lucas know?"

"Nothing," Mike lies. "Just. . . when have you found time to hang out with Jake Perretti?"

Eleven looks at him curiously. This is a side of him that she's never seen before. She searches her ever expanding vocabulary for a describing word and comes up with *jealous*. A few weeks ago, she had overheard Nancy telling Steve to quit being jealous of Jonathan.

"Mike, are you *jealous*?" She asks carefully.

Mike scoffs. *"No!"*

Eleven studies him. "I think you are."

"*Am not!"* Mike argues, sounding a lot like Holly when she argues with her friends at school.

"He doesn't like *me*," Eleven assures him, too mature to respond with *yeah huh!* She nods in the direction of where he was sitting. "Why would he?"

Mike rolls his eyes. "You're every bit as pretty as them. Maybe prettier. And you're really smart. All those girls are only interested in the latest Madonna music video. He'd be lucky to have you and I think he knows it."

"I don't see him outside of school," Eleven tells him. "Sometimes he'll

walk me to my locker after class but that's all. I spend most of my time with *you*."

"He wants to date you, trust me."

Eleven beams. "You *are* jealous!"

"Am *not*!" Mike says again. "It's not like we're—"

He stops short and sighs. Eleven wonders what he was going to say next but decides not to ask because she knows from experience he won't answer her.

"Why are you jealous?" she asks instead.

"If I were jealous it would be because he looks like a movie star," Mike answers. "And how could I ever compete with that?"

Eleven takes Jake in and then studies Mike. "Well, he's kind of boring. All he talks about is sports and cars. And I don't think he pays attention in class. He always asks me if he can look at my notes."

"He has to get good grades or they'll kick him off the football team," Mike argues. "He probably only asks for your notes as an excuse to talk to you."

"Well, if he really knew me, he wouldn't like me," Eleven says like it will settle the whole argument. "He wouldn't get me, not in the way *you* do."

Mike knows he should stop fighting with her but he's not sure she gets *it*. He's not sure she sees how amazing she really is or how every guy she's ever met would be *stupid* for not turning their worlds upside down for her. To not understand her or try to love and fix her broken parts.

She could do so much better than *him*. A Dungeons & Dragons nerd who'd spent his summer at the library reading fantasy novels and working on a new campaign.

"Eleven—"

She shakes her head, signaling the end of the conversation. It's like she can read his thoughts, she reaches out for his hand and clasps it tightly in her's. "I like you Mike," she says.

Three letters, eight words is all it takes for his breath to catch in his throat. He doesn't know if she means if she likes him just as a friend or as something more. But it makes him feel important all the same, knowing she doesn't really like any other boy in any kind of way.

Yeah he knows she *does* like Lucas, Dustin, Will, Jonathan and Steve but they all treat her like a sister. It isn't the same thing and they both know it.

"I will *have* to talk to other boys," she tells him. "Sometimes. Try not to get too jealous!"

Mike flushes bright red. "I was *not* jealous!"

She smiles like she knows a secret. "Okay!"

"Are you two done arguing yet!?" Dustin asks loudly.

"We're being summoned," Mike says even though things aren't exactly resolved between them.

"We're good, right?" Eleven asks suddenly, anxiously.

"Yes!" Mike assures her. "Yes, *of course*!"

He can't seem to bring himself to apologize. If he does, he'll have to admit she was right and he's too cowardly to do that. He doesn't want her to know his weakness. He'll have to fight it. She is not like other girls. She won't be swayed by movie star good looks and an expensive car.

He thinks maybe he'll be stuck with her for life.

And he's okay with that.

TBC. . .

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Author's Note:

I actually have an alternate story to this story. If you're interested in reading it, let me know and I'll post it sometime this weekend, I promise. I know I already wrote a jealous Eleven story but one of my friends in the ST fandom asked me to write jealous Mike and I cannot resist filling requests for my friends.

The song is "the Jealous Kind" by Joe Cocker.

I hope you'll leave a review! I'll be back soon with more.

Lots of Love,

Holly, 10/22/2016

3. things you said too quietly

things you said too quietly

my darling be home soon it's not just these few hours, but I've been waiting since I toddled, for the great relief of having you to talk to

"*Mike!"*

She tries to get his attention in the dark, while she's in the Upside Down version of his world. She thinks he can hear her from the way he looks around the basement expectantly, his face crestfallen when he realizes she's not there.

"*I'm here!"* she says. *"I'm HERE! MIKE!"*

Willing him to talk back, to say *anything.*

He looks up again and shakes his head, not saying anything in return. She knows he is probably doubting his sanity, she is doubting her's.

She needs to find a way to get back to him. Everything in her world is on mute without him and she can't bear the radio silence.

.

She returns in May, six months after she disappeared into dust and ashes in a school classroom. He has conjured her up so many times since she left, he's not sure it isn't just his imagination when she whispers his name.

He turns around in spite of himself, knowing she'll disappear as soon as he does. Knowing if he reaches out for her, she'll vanish into thin air.

But this Eleven is not the one from his dreams. She is skinny bones and flesh. Her hair has started to grow out, a short crop of brunette. Her feet are bare and the dress is straining at the seams. She looks like she hasn't slept *ever* but to Mike she is beautiful.

"Eleven?" he asks finally daring to say her name aloud.

"*Mike!"* she mouths, collapsing to her knees, quiet as a mouse.

He approaches her cautiously, like one would approach an injured animal. Not wanting to startle her. He stops and kneels down beside her, shrugs out of his jacket before draping it over her shoulders. And then she is in his arms, shivering, clinging to him like her life depends on it. Sharp sobs are filling the spaces between them and Mike's not sure which one of them is crying.

"*Mike, Mike, Mike!"* she says over and over again, in strings of threes like the Upside Down or wherever she has been has rendered her speechless.

"*I missed you, I missed you, I missed you so much!"* he replies, his throat thick with tears. He doesn't want to overwhelm her with all the things he's been tucking away for the past 182.5 days. For *someday*, for her return.

.

It starts to get dark when Chief Hopper catches them, still holding onto each other in the woods.

"Oh boy," he says, giving *his* coat to Mike and helping them both up, not able to pry them apart. "How long have you been out here?"

"A *long* time," Eleven answers weakly.

Hopper glances at Mike. "A *long* time?"

"I found her a couple of hours ago," Mike answers. "She must be talking about—"

Hopper nods and wonders how Eleven will react if he takes her to the hospital. He's not too keen on the idea himself. He knows Mike will fight him and that she won't understand it. The ER might just be another lab to her, the promise of latex glove puppets and tangy cherry lollipops won't convince them. She probably doesn't even know what either of those things are.

"Let's get you two Joyce's," he finally says. "Her house is the closest. I was just on my way there for dinner."

Mike nods and turns to Eleven. "We're going to Miss Byers's house," he tells her softly. "She'll bathe you and feed you."

"Stay?" Eleven asks, looking at him hopefully.

Mike points to himself. "Me?"

Eleven nods.

"I am sure Miss Byers will be more than happy to let Mike stay with you," Hopper answers for him. "Come on you two, let's get going."

Mike nods and grasps Eleven by the hand. Together, they navigate their way out of the woods.

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"Stay," Eleven repeats her request from earlier. It's so quiet, he can barely hear her. But she's patting the empty space next her, he realizes she doesn't want him to leave.

So, he joins her on Joyce's bed. Crawls underneath the blankets and lies down beside her, turning over on his side so he can watch her and the way her chest rises and falls every time she takes a breath.

Just in case.

Because he is still in a *what if* state of mind. He needs to know she's really there. That this isn't the most real dream he has ever had of her.

Eleven can sense his distress but she doesn't know if she can articulate to him that she's *really* there. She isn't going anywhere ever again. She can't find the right words, doesn't have the energy to.

Instead she weaves her fingers through his because it's all the proof she can muster up. Porcelain meets an icy cold she wasn't expecting.

He gasps.

"Stay," Eleven says again and then a little firmer, *"Promise!"*

"I promise," Mike answers.

"No! *I* promise!" Eleven corrects him.

"Oh." Mike grins. "Okay!"

For the first time that day, she smiles at him.

For the first time that day. . . for the first time in a *long* time, he is more than certain everything is going to be alright.

She is finally where she is supposed to be and they can hear each other loud and clear.

End

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Author's Note:

I am so sorry this is short. I've had a week from the Upside Down (in this case, it's a euphemism for "hell"). Hopefully things will start to calm down now. I'll be back with another story next Saturday. In the meantime, I hope you'll leave a review or something.

The song I used in this story is "Darling Come Home Soon" by the Lovin' Spoonful. It's like the most Mike & Eleven song. But I say that on a daily basis about 10 different songs. So, this is nothing new.

Until Next Time!

Lots of Love,

Holly, 10/29/2016

4. things you said over the telephone

There's just a bit of mild spoilers. But just a name, for the new character they cast.

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things you said over the phone

why do i keep running from the truth? all i ever think about is you, you've got me hypnotized, so mesmerized

"Max likes Dustin!" Eleven announces on one of the rainy Saturdays they can't spend together, she plops down on the couch and sits cross-legged, tucking the phone between her chin and shoulder.

"Oh? How do you know?" Mike asks with interest.

He and Eleven have often whispered about how cute Dustin and Max would be together. Their own relationship is still undefined, ambiguous at best. She tells him secrets in the dark and he tells her stories about kings and queens to chase away the nightmares. There are kisses and slow dances and hugs that last too long to be just friends. They are forever in a grey area but it doesn't stop them from trying (unsuccessfully) to set up their friends with other people.

"She told me," Eleven says, interjecting into his musings. "Except you're not supposed to tell anybody else because it's a *secret*."

Mike pauses. "Wait. It's a *secret*?"

"Yes," Eleven answers.

"Secrets usually mean you can't tell *anyone* at all," Mike informs her.

Eleven nods even though Mike can't see her. "Yes," she replies. "Max might have said I couldn't tell anyone. But I'm sure she wasn't talking about *you*. She knows we tell each other everything."

"I'm pretty sure she *doesn't* want me to know," Mike answers. "I'm one of Dustin's closest friends. She'll probably think I'll tell him or

something."

"I know you won't," Eleven tells him loyally. He is a faithful keeper of all her secrets and she trusts him with her life.

"I dunno. . . Dustin has been wondering if she likes him as more than a friend," Mike answers playfully.

Eleven's eyes widen. "Michael Wheeler, you *wouldn't* dare!"

"I just might!"

Eleven panics just a little, wondering if these are one of the times he's joking and wishing she was in the same room as him because she can't gauge his expressions. One of the things she is good at is reading his faces.

"You wouldn't!" She repeats nervously.

"Don't worry," Mike assures her, suddenly serious. "I won't say anything but maybe next time somebody tells you a secret, you shouldn't tell me."

"But I *like* telling you things," Eleven answers.

Mike beams. "I like telling you things too," he replies.

"Oh yeah? You and the guys had a sleepover last night too. Does Dustin like Max?"

"It didn't come up," Mike says. "But Lucas thinks the new girl is pretty."

"Is that a secret?"

"He didn't tell me not to tell anyone," Mike teases. "Besides everybody thinks Reeda's pretty."

"Even you?" Eleven asks, a little jealously.

"You're the prettiest girl at school," Mike replies, always knowing the right thing to say to her. He changes the subject back to their friends.

"Hey, maybe we should try and get Dustin and Max together."

"Mmmh, that never works," Eleven answers. "Remember the last time? Dustin freaked out and Max and I wound up seeing *Girls Just Want To Have Fun* while you and Dustin saw *Cat's Eye*. Let's just face it. We're not like Emma!"

"Emma?" Mike repeats, getting whiplash from the way she changes subjects so quickly.

"Jane Austen," Eleven replies. "It's a book I'm reading for school about this girl who tries to match everyone up and it all goes wrongly."

"What happens?"

Eleven sighs. "I don't know. I haven't finished it yet. But Emma is sort of a mouth breather. Come to think of it, she's a terrible matchmaker. She made a lucky guess *once* and. . . ."

She stops, realizing she is rambling about a subject that probably doesn't interest him.

"Eleven?" Mike asks.

"Sorry. I was talking too much."

"It's okay! Talk as much as you like! I-I love hearing the sound of your voice," Mike says sincerely.

"*Seventeen* magazine says not to talk about stuff that doesn't interest your cru-" Eleven trails off. "Never mind. So, what are we going to do about Max and Dustin? It's so obvious he likes her too."

"Don't you hate it when two people can't get their crap together and tell each other what they're really feeling?" Mike asks.

"Because you wouldn't know it to look at her but Max is really actually shy."

Mike laughs, remembering the days when he first knew Max and how she took charge when they were searching for Eleven. "If you say so."

Eleven smiles. "Why are you laughing?"

"Well, Max is anything but shy!" Mike replies. "You should have seen her when we were looking for you. She was a force to be reckoned with. She still is!"

"Well, maybe she's shy around boys she likes!" Eleven tells him, slightly put out.

Mike laughs some more. "Maybe she's afraid he won't like her back!"

"She is," Eleven confirms, lowering her voice. "But *that's* a secret too!"

"Eleven!" Mike tries to be annoyed with her but he can't, he's going crazy with love spells. He has to be careful not to blurt out *I love you* or *I like you*.

They've both said *I like you* before but it was in a different context. To placate hurt feelings, to calm fears and wipe out jealousy. If he says it now, it will be different. It'll mean something more than *just friends* because Max does not like Dustin *just as friends*.

"Mike? Are you still there?" Eleven asks.

"Yeah! I'm still here!" Mike answers hastily.

"I've got to go and help Jonathan with dinner. The Chief's coming over tonight," Eleven tells him. "He likes my mom, you know. That's supposed to be a secret too."

"Everyone knows they're dating," Mike assures her. "They're not doing a good job at hiding it. And I overheard my mom telling my dad that she thinks they'll get married."

"Yeah. . ." Eleven sounds blissfully happy. "It'll be great! Ugh! Jonathan's calling me now. I'll talk to you later, Mike! Try and think of something to get Dustin and Max together. Okay!? 'Bye!"

"Talk to you later," Mike answers. "I like you!" he tacks on at the end.

She laughs, still completely oblivious to what he means by it. "I like you too!"

"Yeah?" Mike asks.

"I like you *a lot*," Eleven says.

Mike blushes. Maybe she does realize what he means by it. But he won't dwell on it. They have friends who they need to help realize are perfect for each other.

And they're still young.

Their day will come.

Eventually when he's a little braver and surer of himself. Not of the way he feels though, never of the way he feels. That is the one thing he knows more in the world. That and it's time to give Dustin a call because it'll make Eleven happy knowing their friends are happy.

And that will make Mike happy.

End

Author's Note:

I don't even know what this is but I had fun writing it amidst NaNoWrimo and my sister's starting to recover from her surgery. I hope you guys enjoyed it and that you will tell me what you thought.

I am in in the middle (?) of a massive Christmas story about Mike & Eleven right now. It is also my NaNoWrimo (National Novel Writing Month) project. But never fear! I *am* going to continue to write and post in this collection. December we will be taking a break though.

The song I used in this is "Crush" by David Archuleta for no other reason than I think it kind of fit the story even if it doesn't.

Until Next Time!

Love,

Holly, 11/5/2016

5. things you didn't say at all

For the sake of the story the Princess Bride references are from the book. Not the movie. I cross referenced both and "as you wish" is in the book as well as the movie.

This is a safe space. I love you all and if you need anything, my inbox is always open. Be safe! Let's love fully, let's love loud and let's love now.

.

things you didn't say at all

it won't do me any good, it's just a waste of time, what use is it to you, what's on my mind, if it ain't coming out, we're not going anywhere, so why can't I just tell you that I care

"*I love you."*

He's been saying it in his head almost ever since he met her though. He just doesn't know how to articulate it. The words get stuck in his throat. Trip over his tongue until they magically transform into something else that doesn't really carry the same weight as those three words do.

Things like "El, let's be friends for the rest of our lives" or "I hope we know each other forever".

He feels like Westley in the Princess Bride, saying "as you wish" to Buttercup. It has a secret meaning only he knows about.

He cannot find 30 seconds of extreme courage to say it for real though. She's told him lots of times, in no uncertain terms that she likes him too. Once she said she that really likes him. But they're in a holding pattern, stuck between like and something more.

He should be braver than he is.

But.

But.

He's not.

She's a whole different life force and he doesn't feel worthy to be in her presence most days. That she actually chose him to be as much as her friend astounds him. He can't risk losing even that. Now that she's in his life, he can't imagine a world without her in it.

The *I love you* is always burning in the middle of his chest though. He wonders if he'll ruin everything, the day he does say it.

He wonders if she feels the same way. He can't read her when it comes to just how much she likes him

He's half-afraid to know the truth because it might be something he doesn't like. It might break his heart.

Other times he wants to rip it off like a Band-Aid, tell her how he feels and get it over with. Quick and fast. Stringing the words together in a jumbled mess.

But they're still so young. Society says they're too young to really know what love is.

And there's a whole world of boys out there she hasn't met yet. He can't box her in, make her feel like she has to stay with him because he was one of the first people ever to give her love and affection.

Not when she only knows him, Dustin, Will, Lucas, Jonathan and Steve as examples of young guys.

If she meets somebody else. . .

He can't let himself finish that thought though.

He can't imagine ever meeting anyone else. Not because they are perfect for each other, because really is anybody perfect for each other? It seems like a novel concept. But ever since they've met, he's felt like his whole entire life had been leading to her.

Like they are tethered to each other.

A concept he hears about much later in their lives together, when a show called Glee is a huge hit and Eleven is completely invested in the fictional singing band of misfits from Lima, Ohio.

Of course, this happens years later and she loves him too. Understands their strange connection.

But for now, he keeps it to himself and it blossoms and flourishes until he can't keep it to himself anymore.

End

.

Author's Note:

Short and sort of rambly. I did the rambling part on purpose, Mike's thoughts about being in love with Eleven. It's been a long week. I've had anxiety attacks. There has been so much unrest in the United States. And before that, I stayed up late to watch the results of the election. The night after that, I had the worst acid reflux I've had in a while. So, I am sorry for the brevity of this piece. I'll write more next time, I promise!

I hope you'll leave a review! The song lyrics are "Things I'll Never Say" by Avril Lavigne.

Until Next Time!

Lots of Love,

Holly, 11/12/2016

6. things you said under the stars

things you said under the stars and in the grass

if everything you've said to me has been true, then all my stars are leading me to you

"Make a wish," Mike whispers.

Mike and Eleven are sprawled out on their backs, in the grass. Its summertime and it's hot, they're feeling lazy after a productive day at the community pool. The rest of the gang has already gone home, so it's just the two of them. Their fingers are brushing against each other, barely touching. They've just spotted a star shooting across the inky black sky.

Eleven closes her eyes like she did on her birthday when she blew out her candles and does as he bids. Knowing better than to tell him what she wished for this time. He had to explain to her after she blurted out what she had wished for that wishes might not come true if you share them with other people.

"Did you make a wish too?" She asks after a beat.

"I usually do," Mike answers.

Eleven frowns, new to the concept of wishes in general. "Why did you tell me to make a wish, Mike?"

"Oh. . . there was a shooting star," he explains. "People say when you wish on a shooting star, they usually come true."

"Have you ever had a wish on a shooting star come true?" Eleven asks, curiously.

Mike nods. "Yeah. They did, once or twice."

"What did you wish for? Since they came true, you can tell me."

Mike's fingers freeze against her knuckles, it should be so easy to tell her but the words are lodged in his throat, it gets turned into a

random fact before he can stop it.

"You know, wishing on falling stars dates back all the way to 127 AD. The Greek astronomer, Ptolemy believed that the gods got bored or were curious so they would peek down from the spheres. Sometimes when it happened, stars would slip out from the gaps and flash towards the earth. The shooting stars were an indication the gods were paying attention to whatever you asked for."

"So, what did you wish for?" Eleven asks again, not easily distracted by a pretty story this time. "When the gods were paying attention to you."

Mike's face grows warmer. "I dunno. Most of the time I wished for stupid stuff."

Eleven sighs, props herself up on her side so she can look at him. "Friends don't lie." in a fit of bravery she takes his hand. "You can tell me anything."

Mike squeezes his eyes shut, takes a deep breath to steady himself. "I wished you would come home," he confesses. "And eventually, it came true."

Eleven falls back down on her back. "How many times did you make wishes?"

"Every night," Mike answers. "Except there weren't always shooting stars."

"The gods don't get bored a lot?"

Mike laughs. "That's just a story, Eleven. A shooting star is really just a small piece of rock or dust that hits Earth's atmosphere from space. It moves so fast that it heats up and glows as it moves through the atmosphere."

Eleven wrinkles her nose. "I like the other explanation better."

"I do too," Mike admits, even though he is a man of science he still prefers fiction to fact, sometimes.

"It's more romantic," Eleven adds.

"You've been talking to Nancy again," Mike observes.

"Mmmh," Eleven murmurs, scooting a little closer and resting her head against his. "It's so pretty out here tonight."

Mike's head is spinning from how quickly she's changed the subject, from how close she suddenly is. He can smell trace amounts of chlorine and sunblock on her skin, can feel the warmth of leftover sun on her arms and cheeks.

Talk about gods and shooting stars and making wishes are far away from his mind. All he can think about his things he still hasn't said yet. Words that are dangerously close to the tip of his tongue. He swallows hard.

"Yeah it is," he finally agrees.

"You know what else is pretty?" Eleven asks.

"What?" Mike asks hoarsely.

"You," she whispers.

Mike laughs, he's told her a million times that boys can't be pretty but she hasn't picked up on the concept. "You're pretty too," he replies, holding her hand tighter.

Like magic, there's another shooting star. Eleven pokes him.

"Make a wish," she whispers.

Mike shuts his eyes and wishes for a million more nights like these, stretched out under an endless sky with the girl he loves more than anything or anyone else in the world. He's not sure but he thinks, maybe she's wishing for the same thing.

End

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Author's Note:

Once again, my apologizes for the brevity of this story. I have a good excuse. I've been sick for the whole week and even though I knew where this story was going, it went rogue on me. So, I hope you enjoyed it a little bit and that you'll tell me what you thought!

The song is "Oh My Stars" by Andrew Belle.

And even though we haven't been together long, I want you all to know I'm thankful for all of you. The Stranger Things fandom is one of the best ones I've been a part of.

Until Next Time!

Lots of Love,

Holly, 11/19/2016

7. things you said while we were driving

things you said while we were driving

Summer 1987

the world is alive and shining, i feel such a wonderful drive to valentine-ing

"Wanna go for a drive?" Mike asks, casually leaning against the convertible he has just finished restoring.

"It's done!?" Eleven squeals, jumping up and down on the porch.

"I just finished it about 20 minutes ago!" Mike answers proudly. "I'm going to take my favorite girl out for a spin to see how it runs before I try and sell it. What do you say?"

Eleven looks flattered. "Are you talking about me?"

"I don't see any other girls around," Mike says. "So? Do you wanna?"

"Hold on, I have to tell my mom that I'm going out!" Eleven replies, disappearing inside Castle Byers. She returns a few minutes later, with a fistful of cassettes and wearing sunglasses and an oversized, chunky knit cardigan because it's unusually cool for August. "Mama says it's okay if I go, I just have to be home in time for dinner."

"Okay!" Mike agrees and seconds later, they're driving down the road and she's blasting music from the tape player he installed, her bare feet on the dashboard as she sings along with Carpenters songs.

She looks at him and smiles. "Sing with me, Mike?" she asks as she turns the volume up. "And don't say you don't know the song because I know it's a lie! Besides the guys aren't around. There's nothing to be embarrassed about!"

Mike blushes. "Fine. But this stays between us, I don't want you running home and telling Max about it! She tells Dustin *everything*!"

"I promise!" Eleven says, hooking her finger through his and shaking

it in a pinky swear.

Mike takes a deep breath and starts to sing, *"You are the one who makes me happy when everything else turns to gray. Yours is the voice that wakes me mornings and sends me out into the day."*

She joins him with her sweet alto voice. The teen choir director at church says the angels weep with happiness when the two of them sing together and today, under the sunshine and the open road, Mike believes her. They're a perfect harmony, like God created them especially to be together.

"*You are the crowd that sits quiet listening to me,"* Eleven joins him, closing her eyes as they sing together. *"And all the mad sense I make, you are one of the few things worth remembering. And since it's all true, how can anyone mean anything more to me than you? Sorry if sometimes I look past you, there's no one beyond your eyes. Inside my head, the wheels are turning and sometimes I'm not so wise."*

Mike stops singing and glances at her, suddenly overwhelmed with words he still hasn't said. He's wondering what's been taking him so long to say it.

"*You are my heart and my soul, my inspiration—"* Eleven pauses, suddenly very self-conscious. "Mike? Is everything okay? I'm not singing off-key, am I?"

He shakes his head. "No," he says hoarsely.

"Well come on, we didn't finish the song!" She replies, tugging at his arm, trying to urge him to finish the song with her.

Mike clears his throat and opens his mouth but nothing comes out, not a single sound except for a squeak. She looks at him anxiously then leans over to kill the music. They are left with silence, save for the wind rushing past them as they drive down the road.

He swallows and then pulls over, letting the convertible idle. Eleven knots her hands in her floral print skirt and stares straight ahead, confused to how things could have gotten so serious, so fast.

"Eleven," Mike whispers.

She looks over at him, her heart pounding harder, there is something she doesn't recognize in his voice and yet, she thinks it's always been there. "Yeah?" she whispers back.

Mike swallows again, his throat and mouth suddenly incredibly dry. She looks at expectantly and he realizes there will probably never be the perfect time or place to say *it*. He'll never be incredibly courageous.

And those three words.

He's been hosting them for too long, they're starting to eat him up inside, he expels a deep breath and decides just to say it.

"Wanna get a Coke?" he jokes instead.

"What?" Eleven asks weakly, deflating slightly.

"I mean. . ." Mike trails off and takes his hands off the wheel, running them through his hair. "Why the hell is this so hard to say!?"

Eleven senses his distress and puts her hand on his knee to steady him. He drops one hand on top of her's and weaves their fingers together.

"You can tell me anything," she says, pushing her sunglasses up on her head.

"I know," Mike answers.

"You've been keeping secrets from me," Eleven observes.

"For longer than you could imagine," Mike replies wryly.

"Bad secrets?" Eleven asks, frowning.

Mike shakes his head. "Secrets that could change everything between us, forever."

Eleven feels like her world is tipping off its axis. "You like someone else better than you like me, don't you? Who is she? The pretty blonde you tutored in trig?"

Mike's eyes widen and he tightens his grip on her hand. "No! Ellie, it isn't anything like that! I could *never* like anybody more than I like you! Not for as long as I live!"

"Then what is it?" Eleven whispers.

"You can't see it?" Mike asks.

Eleven shrugs. "I'm still not great at picking up social cues, Mike. Please just tell me. I need to know."

Mike knows then he has to tell her. There will be no perfect moment, no pomp or circumstance. No John Hughes happy ending with them riding off into the sunset or kissing on a table with birthday cake between them.

The abnormal circumstances he has always imagined for their first *I love you* will be decidedly unremarkable, a change of pace for two of Hawkins resident weirdos.

Except there can be music, he leans over and turns the radio back on. As luck would have it, music is playing instead of a set of commercials.

For the next few moments, it feels like the whole universe is holding its breath with anticipation.

He lifts her hand to his mouth and kisses it. Eleven freezes, the dread in her face is suddenly replaced with hope.

"I mean what I've been trying to say is that I've become a whole different person ever since I met you. I was just a dorky 12-year-old who didn't really have any clue what love was. I couldn't even imagine a life outside of my own world. Then I found you and you helped me see the world. . . *my* world differently, you showed me what it could be. And I-I love you for it. You don't even know how much I love you Eleven."

She leans over and presses her mouth against his. He's startled at first but it doesn't take him long to reciprocate, marveling at both of their newfound bravery. He's amazed at how freeing actually saying those three little words out loud really is. It's like a great weight has been

lifted off of his shoulders.

He feels like he has been branded into somebody brand new. The whole world is bright and shiny, like in one of his mother's favorite Barbra Streisand songs. Even kissing her feels different, he wonders if she can feel it too.

She pulls away, rests her forehead against his. "I love you too," she hums.

He initiates the kiss this time and he swears he can taste fairytales and happily ever afters on her mouth. Now that it's out in the open, he knows nothing will ever be the same between them again.

But neither of them seems to mind.

"Say it again," she requests.

"I love you," Mike says, stronger and braver than before.

She beams. "I love you too."

They say it all the way back to her house and Mike doesn't think he'll ever be able to stop.

End

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Author's Note:

Real talk, this story went through *seven* songs before I finally picked the one with the feeling and lyrics I was going for. I could have probably picked a dozen others. Initially, Mike and Eleven were *not* going to say "I love you" but I had no control over it. It happened and it fit so well, I had to keep it. I have a crazy head canon where Mike sings old 70s songs with his mom while they're cleaning the kitchen after dinner, so that's how he knows them.

I hope you enjoyed this. I definitely enjoyed writing it.

Be back soon. Maybe with the story that I was first writing before I came up with this piece. We'll see! The songs in this were "He Touched Me" by Barbra Streisand and "You" by Carpenters.

Until Next Time!

Lots of Love,

Holly, 11/26/2016

8. things i said while you were crying

Disclaimer: I own nothing.

Thank you for your continued support of this series.

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things i said when you were crying

Fall 1986

you are beautiful no matter what they say, words can't bring us down

"What if everyone's right?" El asks. "What if I'm not normal?"

It's the first day of school and she's been crying on and off since gym had ended.

"Some of the girls made fun of her in P.E today," Jennifer Hayes whispers while she waits for her bus.

Mike is at a loss of what to do. He's dealt with crying El before but not because she's been bullied by mean girls. His first instinct is to go to a pay phone and call his mom or Joyce to come and help.

But before he can do it, El turns to him.

"Why do you like me? I'm not pretty," she says. "Not like Jen or Max. I don't have long hair like Veronica. I'm not blonde like Tiffany and I don't have a big. . ." she gestures to her chest, causing Mike to blush and quickly divert his gaze to a clump of dying flowers. "Like Stacie. . . I'm not even into the same stuff as the other girls are."

"So?" Mike asks. "The stuff the other girls are into is stupid! Like the only reason they like *Top Gun* is because of Tom Cruise. And who knows why they like *Pretty in Pink*. It has the dumbest ending! Don't even get me started on Madonna. You don't want to be like everyone else.

"You would probably like me better."

"Says *who*?" Mike challenges.

"Veronica, Tiffany and Stacie," Eleven lists off, sniffing. "Veronica says if I looked and acted more like a girl, you would finally ask me out."

Mike wonders how she cannot see to how utterly feminine she really is. With her delicate features and her pixie cut and big eyes, she's already managed to capture the attention of every single guy in school. He remembers how even Jake Perretti would flirt with her at the pool during summer vacation.

She's the princess of Hawkins and the girls are awful about it because they are terrified of having their queen bee status revoked. They've always ruled the school, lowly subjects they are not. Tearing down El is their way to remind themselves they still hold all the cards.

"Oh El," he says aloud. "They're all just jealous because they can see how great you really are. They have to tear you down because it's the only way for them to build themselves up."

Fresh tears leak from her eyes. "I want everyone to like me," she confesses.

He wants everyone to like her too. She deserves it, she deserves the world. Not more cruelty.

She's rubbing her eyes hard. There are mascara streaks all over her cheeks. He reaches out and rubs the inky stains away from her face.

"And people *do* like you," he says, producing a tissue from his pocket. "There's Max and Jennifer. Holly adores you, same with Steve and Jon and Nancy. . ." he ticks off their names one-by-one, saving himself for last. "And I-*I* like you."

A lot.

El gives him a leaky sort of smile. "I like you too, Mike."

"It's their loss, they're missing out on a *great* friend," Mike says.

She leans over and gives him a hug, he holds her tightly. High school

is already off to a rough start but they have each other and he knows everything will be okay.

The End

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Author's Note:

I know this was short but I've been struggling with how to execute this story and I've been sick and with my sister and brother-in-law all week. All the same, I hope you enjoyed this tiny little one-shot. I promise my next story in this series will be slightly longer! Or at least I'll try to make it longer anyways.

The song I used for this story is "Beautiful" by Christina Aguilera

Tell me what you think, if you want!

Until Next Time!

Lots of Love,

Holly, 1/14/2017